
INDEPENDENCE DAY
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NEWSLETTER
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BACK ISSUES

We have some! Also, copies of the first and third issues that were printed some years ago and distributed to stores. Very hard to find! Also...extra copies of this issue available. ***IT'S ONLY A MOVIE***—the magazine! Limited national distribution: Issues 1 & 3 for $15.00 each or $25.00 for the pair. Professionally published. ***IT'S ONLY A MOVIE***—the newsletter. #7: Peter Lorre bio, Rumble in the Bronx, Beach Boys Lost Smile LP—$3.00. #10: Lon Chaney Sr. bio, reviews of ***VAMPIRE IN BROOKLYN, STRANGE DAYS***...more—$3.00. #11: Tod Browning bio, Vincent Price hot dog recipe, reviews of ***12 MONKEYS, JUMANJI, TOY STORY***...more—$3.00. #12: James Whale bio, X-Files con report, reviews of ***BROKEN ARROW, SCREAMERS, FROM DUSK TO DAWN,*** perfect martini recipe, trends in pop culture, more—$3.00. #13: ***SPEED*** analyzed, reviews of ***CHUN KING EXPRESS, FARGO, EXECUTIVE DECISION,*** the Hollywood blacklist re-examined, more—$3.00. #14: 1970's Black Film issue-send copies to friends—$3.00.

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BLECHBUSTERS

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This month's column is dedicated to Demi Moore, the star of *Parasite* - from dancing with Springsteen in a video to dancing nekkid and as a cartoon this month. Like her husband Bruce Willis, Demi's taken lots of flack from hacks because of her gutsy attitude, her unconventional lifestyle and career, and her appearances in both runaway hits and awful dreck. But I've always been taken with Demi, and will remain so until I meet her face to face and she's rude to me. Then maybe I'll turn on her.

Other Double-Dippers this month include cult faves Ving Rhames and Brent Spiner.

THE HUNCHBACK OF NOTRE DAME

Just as Disney is being attacked by lame-brained Christian groups for their benign attitude toward their homosexual employees, they release this powerful new animated version of Hugo's tale. The hero is a tortured member of several oppressed minority groups who sings of going "Out There". The villain is an incredibly hypocritical public figure who preaches morality while dishing out hatred. He becomes frustrated to the breaking point as his church tolerantly protects those he seeks to murder - as usual, those self-proclaimed God's Warriors who shout the loudest are also those least in touch with the messages in their Bibles. This is Disney's most adult movie ever, and also one of their best, with animation and direction that pays tribute to their past achievements (it begins with a zoom similar to that in *Pinocchio*, there's a scene recalling *The Old Mill*) while breaking new ground at the same time. The story combines several of the best elements of all previous versions - while the songs aren't so hot, many scenes play out like an operetta. It's a visually stunning work that had chills running up my spine. Good voice work by Demi, Kevin Kline, Tony Jay, and Jason Alexander. The weak link would have to be in the casting of Tom Hulce as Quasimodo. His voice is too boyish and soft - I would've preferred richer, uglier sounds coming from the hunchback's throat. But bravo to Disney for sticking to their guns and fighting back for once.

ERASER

This Schwarzenegger action flick takes an intriguing premise (a top FBI agent who "erases" the lives of relocating witnesses) and quickly wastes it by turning down the tired old path that has a man & woman on the run from a bunch of crooks & cops, while trying to get the evidence that will set things right. James Caan is Arnold's former mentor and boss, who somehow decided one day to become a totally evil bastard. Some great action and f/x

(including supersonic guns and hungry alligators) lift it above the average, but with a lower budget this could have been a Van Damme picture.

THE ROCK

This is an oddly unbalanced, but very enjoyable action film. Disgruntled colonel Ed Harris is justly pissed about how the government treats families of men killed on secret missions and such. He steals some missiles, loads them with an ultra-deadly bioweapon, and take tourists hostage on Alcatraz. FBI geek Nicolas Cage teams up with escape expert Sean Connery to sneak in and defuse the missiles. All the main characters are very well written and performed. Not surprisingly, this tends to clash a bit with the cartoonish level the overblown action often reaches. Director Michael Bay manages to keep the lid on just enough to keep things under control, for the most part. Contains a manic chase scene which pays tribute to movie chase scene clichés.

STRIPTEASE

Demi, fighting to get custody of her daughter from the very lowest ex-husband in history (Robert "T-1000" Patrick), is "forced" to take up stripping in order to raise money for her appeal (although when the hearing is delayed for several months, she's in no hurry to quit). She looks a bit self-conscious on stage, but that's probably in character. Her bigger problem is that Patrick, Ving Rhames (as a lovable bouncer), Armand "Mambo" Assante (as a good cop), Burt Reynolds (as a horny Senator), and a gallery of kooky supporting players constantly threaten to steal the movie from her, and often succeed. I find it hard to believe that a woman this smart, warmhearted and beautiful would get together with such an absolute cretin in the first place - but then, I find it hard to believe that it happens so often in real life, too. This wacky comedy is one of those movies that catwalks down the wobbly wall between "good" and "sucks", without really falling into either side.

TRAINSPOTTING

The funniest movie about heroine junkies you'll ever see. There's cruel robbery, nightmarish withdrawal, sex with minors, a dead baby, hopeless urban decay, sickening bowel dysfunction, death via AIDS, punk and rave music, brutal beatings, psychosis, betrayal, depression... and it's all still darn funny. Maybe it's me. Maybe *I'm* the sick one. Or maybe it's because they're in Scotland.

THE NUTTY PROFESSOR

In this remake of the classic Jerry Lewis comedy, Eddie Murphy continues his love affair with makeup man Rick Baker, playing an ingenious but obese college professor who changes his DNA to make himself thin. But it also increases his testosterone to ultra-asshole levels. For years, everyone has assumed that Lewis' Mr. Hyde character, suave swinger Buddy Love, was meant to lampoon his former partner Dean Martin. Lewis denies this and I believe him - as over the years,

we've seen the dark side of Lewis unleashed. Who can forget those golden drug/ego-drenched telethons of bygone years? He was more likely lampooning his own dark side. Here, Murphy does essentially the same - audiences love him when he's buried under makeup, but become instantly uncomfortable whenever the real Eddie appears. What's more, while Lewis hired beloved character actors to play his parents, Murphy grabs the roles of his whole family for himself. Maybe this film will allow Murphy to exorcise his personal demons and revert to the relaxed, beloved smartass we all loved. Or maybe he'll make movies just as hilariously wretched as Lewis' later flicks and start hosting embarrassing telethons. Either way, he's still a talent to watch. Also, keep an eye on great young comic Dave Chapelle, who plays a goofy blue insult comic in a nightclub.

THE CABLE GUY

Unlike Lewis and Murphy, Jim Carrey has yet to become consumed by his dark side. Maybe this movie will help him keep an eye on the problem. Here he plays a deeply troubled cable installer who becomes frighteningly obsessed with winning the friendship and admiration of his customers - specifically, a nicely underplaying Matthew Broderick. Much like Akroyd and Belushi's experiment *Neighbors*, this is actually a psychological horror film disguised as a comedy, and as such it's both funny and chilling. It's also confusing the hell out of most audiences who just don't get it - I found myself laughing by myself half the time. Director Ben Stiller shows up in TV clips as former twin child stars who become the center of a Menendez/OJ-style media circus. Stiller's TV troupe Andy Dick, Janeane Garofalo, and Bob Odenkirk show up in bit parts.

PHENOMENON

A rewrite of Keyes' *Flowers for Algernon.* Good-natured small town lug John Travolta turns suddenly turns into an ultragenius. Everybody gets scared of him, except foxy widow Kyra Sedgewick. If he'd reject that creepy Scientology and join the even creepier Church of the SubGenius, he'd learn how to turn that hate, fear and distrust to his advantage. Good perfs all around, especially from Forrest Whitaker and Robert Duvall. I enjoyed the way all that thinking made my head hurt.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Nearly every country in the world seems to have some kind of independence day holiday, and they all celebrate the same way - by blowing up stuff real good! It's some kind of shared tension/release effect that brings us all closer together. Think about it: ever since Hiroshima blew up, the USA and Japan have never been closer. Sensing this odd human condition which connects spectacular explosions with brotherly love, director Roland Emmerich satisfies it perfectly with the most explosive sci-fi epic ever made. You can criticize it for glossing over pertinent details (see sidebar), or for being overly derivative (see the other sidebar), or for a

bit of poor casting (Randy Quaid should have played the President), but nobody can fault *ID4* for the power of its spectacle. It's big fun from start to finish. The plot: Evil evil aliens come to Earth and try to exterminate us pesky Earthlings. Survivors band together to find a way to fight back. Ka-BOOM! Ooooh! Aaaaah! Any questions?

Independence Day: The Alien Invasion Explained

Okay, so you've seen *Independence Day* and you've got questions. I don't blame you - the filmmakers chose to keep the story moving quickly and fail to explain very much. Let's see if I can clear things up a bit - but since I'm making this up from the information in the movie, I could be wrong here and there. [SPOILER WARNING: If you haven't seen *ID4* yet, you may want to skip reading this until you do. Otherwise, you won't be surprised by some things, like the fact that the good guys win -oops!]

Man, that mothership was big. Why didn't it screw up tides and stuff?

Probably because of the kind of propulsion they use. On a planetary scale, it has no significant relative mass.

Why didn't they just nuke us?

They wanted to exterminate the humans and move in, using up the planet's resources. It's likely they're also vulnerable to radiation. Nuking the planet would render it useless. Try to avoid it.

Why didn't they just zap us from orbit?

Their big artillery, those huge plasma cannons, work by projecting a beam of plasma which explodes everything it touches (the explosions spread the plasma further, resulting in a wide circle of destruction). It's likely the plasma may have dissipated in the atmosphere. The payload must be delivered as close to the target as possible.

Why not destroy all the cities at once?

Not enough of those big artillery discs to go around. Good thing they underestimated us.

Why'd the big discs move so slow?

Only the mothership has interstellar engines. The big discs are meant only to carry the plasma cannons, which probably require immense amounts of energy. Traveling at only a few hundred mph is probably fast enough, especially since the cannons have to recharge.

Why did the aliens use hours and minutes in their countdown?

They didn't. Goldblum decoded their decaying message and calculated the time left.

With their big ships, why do they need those fleet of saucers?

To mop up. The big plasma cannons can't get to everything. Plus, they can defend the big disc's weak spot underneath from attack.

How'd they find out how the alien saucer works?

They didn't - but they figured out how to use it, with some adaptations. I can't build a CD player, but I can use one. Machines are usually designed to be as easy to use and maintain as possible (believe it or not).

In Larry Niven's novel* Footfall, *aliens took over the Earth by dropping big rocks on us until we gave up. Why didn't the ET's do that? And if they have such advanced technology, why didn't they have anti-virus software? And why didn't they know Goldblum and Smith were in the ship?

As we learned from the ET P.O.W., they're a lot like us. It's entirely possible that they may not even be as smart as us - just a lot more aggressive. They may have stolen all their technology from other races they've conquered. They may have been incredibly overconfident and not taken the proper precautions. Also, they're very different. In Wells' version of the story, the Martians had never invented the wheel. Computer viruses are invented by pranksters and anarchists - maybe they don't have any.

How did they find Earth in the first place?

They sent out scouts. We foolishly let one phone home.

THE ID4 SWIPE FILE

Independence Day steals from (or pays tribute to, depending on your point of view) bits, pieces, and big chunks of other works. Here's a quick guide. If you think of any more, let me know. [SPOILER WARNING: see previous spoiler warning]

IDEA	SOURCE
Aliens attack Earth	An obscure video game called *Space Invaders*
ET bullies pick on moon before attacking Earth	*Superman 2*
Begins with huge spaceships taking position over Earth's cities	Arthur Clarke's novel *Childhood's End* (in pre-production for about 15 years)
Well intentioned (but dumb) crowd greets ETs	*War of the Worlds, Close Encounters of the Third Kind*
Scientist hero decodes ET message	*Earth Vs. the Flying Saucers*
Captured ET gets loose and raises ruckus behind glass-walled lab	*Aliens, Lifeforce*
Cool f/x dogfights	*Hell's Angels, Battlestar Galactica, Star Wars, Flying Tigers*, etc., etc., etc.
ETs use hi-tek weapons against family dog	Everybody's favorite *Mars Attacks!* Card
Saucers zap famous landmarks	*War of the Worlds, Earth Vs. the Flying Saucers*
Nukes won't stop 'em	*War of the Worlds, Kronos*
Alien menace vulnerable to virus	*War of the Worlds*
Humans invade mothership to deliver payload	*Star Wars, Return of the Jedi, Guns of Navaronne*, etc.

La Sangre es la Vida

by

Michael Ferguson

Sixty-five years ago under a canopy of Southern Californian darkness, evil things were being acted out. Universal Pictures' *Dracula* was being played before the cameras and there was a bustle of activity to finish before dawn. Like it's title vampire, the film cast and crew were ordered to conduct all of their business by night. They were forbade from working during the daylight hours and such a unique psychological edict would be fascinating Hollywood legend --"Vampire Film Shot From Dusk til Dawn"-- if it weren't for the fact that Tod Browning and Bela Lugosi were snoozing.

Over 22 such nights in late 1930, director George Melford, whose rather unremarkable *The Sheik* (1921) proved Rudolph Valentino's superstar vehicle, directed his cast through an interpreter who could relay his instructions in the actors' native language...Español.

Spanish-language versions of American movies were a budgetary-efficient phenomenon in the early days of sound films when a Mexican market and Spanish-speaking population proved not only close but profitable. *Dracula* cost a handsome $442,000 to produce, complete with its cavernous Charles D. Hall-designed sets of the vampire's castle and Carfax Abbey at Whitby, but the cost of using the same sets on off-hours to shoot an "identical" foreign-language version amounted to a mere $66,000 investment.

Instead of paying the English actors double-time to shoot a Spanish version, as Laurel and Hardy used to do--phonetically and quite noticeably reading their lines from cue cards, Universal hired a Spanish cast and delegated a flip-flop arrangement: the English-version would shoot by day, the Spanish-version would shoot by night.

The result was a Spanish film completed 13 days *before* the English version and running a full 29 minutes *longer*. Universal previewed the Spanish-version in Los Angeles a whole month before the English-version would appear and Bela Lugosi, all-smiles, attended for publicity purposes. The reviews were excellent, going so far as to say that if the English version is anything like the Spanish, Universal would have nothing to worry about.

Well, it wasn't. And they didn't.

The Spanish-version was never copywritten by Universal, who apparently felt no attachment to it as years passed. The Library of Congress had a fairly good copy, but it was incomplete, and so it was that author and Dracula-archivist David Skal ventured to Cuba in 1989 to see what was rumored to be

the most complete and well-preserved print on the planet. His resulting report, furnished in his superb book **Hollywood Gothic** (1990), which chronicles the transition of *Dracula* from novel to stage to screen, claims the Spanish film's superiority over the creaky Lugosi "classic."

Available on video through Universal since 1992, after a couple of years of legal maneuvering, the Spanish-version provides a rewarding look at how two directors approached the same material. Though Melford saw dailies from the English-version, he was not constrained to recreate them. In fact, the only actor allowed, nay, mandated, to watch footage from the daylight shoot was Carlos Villerias, who was told to study the Lugosi performance and copy it as much as possible.

Villerias doesn't have a chance. With a lumpy face and distinctly undistinguished looks, he's further plagued by modern audiences easily seeing, as Skal points out, the decidedly distracting facial resemblance to Carl Reiner's Alan Brady character on the Dick Van Dyke show, complete with hair-piece, as Villarias pasted on the same widow's peak Lugosi wore during the daytime production.

Villerias simply hasn't the exoticism, the dark romantic looks and penetrating charisma of Lugosi. Watching him in most scenes is like watching a classic performed by a novice. When attempting to frighten with leering, pop-eyed stares, Villerias looks loony (as did Valentino in Melford's *The Sheik*) and when Renfield cuts his finger slicing bread, which is a direct nod to *Nosferatu* (as Browning's Renfield cuts himself with a paper clip), Villerias' reaction to the swinging crucifix amounts to a facial contortion akin to the detection of a foul odor.

On the other hand, in extreme close-ups of his hungry eyes, with all the rest of his face obscured, Villerias manages a frightening gaze; his bloodshot, watering eyes looking remarkably like Christopher Lee's.

The sexual elements of vampirism are played to a greater degree in the Spanish-version, with Dracula's vampire brides appearing far more frightening and predatory than the ethereal, ghostly synchronicity of Browning's trio. Interestingly, the Spanish Dracula allows the *brides* to feast on Renfield in a very effectively built sequence, whereas Lugosi enters and the brides glide into retreat as he descends upon his first male victim. (The studio wanted to make sure that Lugosi was never seen with his lips in close proximity to Dwight Frye's neck.)

Furthermore, Lupita Tovar's Eva has more life blood and verve than does Helen Chandler's rather pallid Mina. Once bitten, she is outfitted in a low-cut diaphanous nightgown for her bursting with joyous laughter immediately preceding her attempt on fiancé Harker's throat. Earlier on in the film, in one of many sequences mired in the talkiness of the play and during which characters describe visually intriguing nightmare episodes instead of having the

film actually show them to us (e.g., Renfield's "Rats, rats, rats" soliloquy and Mina's nocturnal visit by her dead friend Lucy), Eva confides to all present that a particularly disturbing dream in which a man's livid white face came out of the dark and came closer and closer to her left her "weak, as if I had lost my virginity."

You might guess this particular allusion didn't make the final cut in the English-language version.

Continuing along this line of more graphic presentation, the Spanish-version doesn't hesitate to show us the close-up of the two tiny wounds on Lucy's neck --under a magnifying glass no less.

As to why these and other shots don't show up in Browning's version probably has something to do with how unhappy the director was at the time. Struggling both with alcohol and the studio, he simply failed to complete his shot list and thus several scenes are presented in tableau or medium shots instead of cutting for close-ups or inserts.

A classic example is provided in the scene where Renfield crawls across the floor toward the maid who has fainted dead away in front of him. The script calls for a clever sight gag, one you don't even get a hint at in Browning's version, but can see at last in the Melford take. (Aw, c'mon, just rent it.)

At 104 minutes, the Spanish version doesn't seem a bit longer than Browning's 75 minute version, so it's not padding that makes up the difference, it's completed and usable footage.

Pablo Alvarez Rubio's Renfield is wonderfully nutty, not as much the seething, pathetic, morose little madman of Dwight Frye's. Though I prefer Frye's performance and inimitable gloating "laugh," it would have been nice to see him given as much screen time as Rubio gets, including a speech about having graduated Oxford that is suddenly interrupted by a distracting fly and another clever ploy.

Likewise, Browning's film completely forgets about the fate of poor Miss Lucy, last seen wandering the night and, according to newspapers, seducing little girls with candy only to bite their necks (another missed visual opportunity). At least Melford shows Van Helsing and Harker emerging from the local cemetery after having driven a stake through her heart.

One of the other striking areas in which the Spanish version is far more creatively designed than the American is in its visualization of the Count's emergence from his coffin. Browning's version, you may recall, curiously avoids the sight of Lugosi getting out of his earth-box, perhaps because it looked too undignified. Melford solves the problem by shooting from *behind* the box, with the lid creaking open *towards* us, followed by a dramatic cloud of smoke billowing upwards from within the coffin, through which emerge the features of Dracula, eerily lit from below to cast shadows across his visage.

Overall, *both* films make brilliant use of sound and, more importantly, sound born out of

heavy silence. What a strange notion for a horror film at the dawn of Talkies to realize that its silence should play such an important role. *Dracula* has been chewed up over the years for its lack of a music track, but the eerie contrast between dead silence and the intrusive sounds of creaking coaches, doors and coffins, the tinkle of a music box or the melancholy howl of a far-off wolf are extremely effective.

Melford's *Dracula* isn't flawless, mind you, but very well thought out, optimized, with an eye for visual details and the creation of mood. Truthfully, it's more brightly lit than Browning's, which sometimes works against it, and for all its interesting camerawork by George Robinson, its exploration of Hall's gorgeous sets and attention to frame composition, it lacks the nearly poetic, otherworldly stupor of the Lugosi film. The significant lack of a powerful presence in the personage of Conde Dracula is a big reason. But there are a few other minor "flubs," too, such as the avoidance of the stage play's timely announcement of "Count Dracula" immediately after Harker asks Van Helsing, "What could have caused those marks?" to a noticeably less-effective cross-cut-away from the showdown between Van Helsing and Dracula to the prelude of Eva's attempted necking with her fiancé Juan.

George Melford's *Dracula* is, without a shadow of a doubt, a much better film than Browning's choppy "classic," clearly far more influenced by F.W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* than by the Deane-Balderston stageplay that entraps Browning's version. Watching them back to back, it's very hard to resist mentally transporting the English cast to the Spanish scenes; if for no other reason, than to allow them to finish the film they all thought they were going to make.

Just imagine Dwight Frye wandering into the cobwebbed castle, a diminutive figure at the bottom of the screen. Cut to a medium shot as he looks about and a bat suddenly swoops down at him. He waves it off with his cane and then jolts as his eyes fix on a dark figure perched upon the broken stairwell in front of him. The camera dramatically glides past Frye and then up onto the steps, quickly moving in on the strange, caped Bela Lugosi, framing him on the staircase with flickering candle in hand to announce that, "I am...Dracula. I bid you welcome."

It almost makes one wish a 48-year old Hungarian actor, who practically pleaded to take the job and then settled for the paltry sum of $3,500 because Universal knew how desperate he was, could have spoken Spanish.

Given the fact he learned his first American stage roles phonetically, I wish the hell they would have let him. Not only is the Spanish-version in dire need of his services, but Lugosi's magnificent Count Dracula deserves the better film.

"We love film geeks"



IT'S ONLY A MOVIE!

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1665 w. Fullerton (just west of Ashland) **665-1110**

ZINE REVIEWS

Here's the latest zine reviews. To check out these labors of love, send cash or a check to the name of the person listed, as most of these fanzines don't make enough to cover printing or postage costs. But I believe you will love them.

KAIJU REVIEW #8 - Dan Reed - 301 East 64th Street, Suite Five F, NYC, NY 10021 ($4) - By now everyone knows my love of Japanese monster movies. You can only imagine how excited I was to receive this issue of fantastic fantasy femmes of Japanese monster movies - sixty pages packed with photos, art, great writing on the women and some terrific surprises as well! Like a comparison of the two scripts for the first American Godzilla film from Tri Star. There's already word that the two scripts have been junked, but it will be interesting to compare the new film to the two scripts when it finally comes out. My only complaint? THAT I DON'T HAVE THE FIRST SEVEN ISSUES! How did this get by me?!? Unlike SHE and other Asian-women-in-film zines, this one will actually INFORM you about the actresses. A must.

CASHIERS DU CINEMART #6 - Mike White - P.O.Box 2401, Riverview, MI 46192 ($3 and\ or $5 for the video *Who Do You Think You're Fooling*) - Everybody has heard of the video that compares *City on Fire* and *Reservoir Dogs,* but few have actually seen it. Now you know where to get it. But don't stop there - CASHIERS DU CINEMART is one of the best reads out there. Look at this line up - a JACKIE CHAN interview, an article on the ANDRE THE GIANT HAS A POSSE sticker phenomenon that Mike actually GIVES you one of the stickers with! A great piece on Charlton Heston starring in *The Omega Man* and reviews ABBA IN CONCERT! Lots more. Get it!

TERMINAL BRAIN ROT #6 - Mike Huegen - 7312 Reynard Lane, Charlotte, NC, 28215 ($2, or $5 for 4 issues) - There is a great article about the ultimate prom night - the night in 1968 when THE YARDBIRDS played at St. Xavier High School! There is also a piece on WHITE CASTLE burgers - it may be hard to believe, but when people leave states that have them for ones that don't they miss them. Film reviews.. bizarre record reviews - when you pick it up at Quimby's or get it through the mail, open a brew and enjoy!

3 A.M. #19 - Joseph Johnson - 152 West 3rd Street, Oil City, PA 16303 ($2) - The last issue of the true alternative pop culture zine shouldn't be missed. Sleazy cheesy rock, film and records. Did I mention reviews of Mexican monster movies? Put on the early Cramps when you read this one.

GIANT ROBOT #5 - Eric Nakamura - P.O.Box 2053, LA, CA 90064 ($5, or a 4 issue sub for $15) - The most perfect zine being published today, above or below ground. Giant Robot covers Asian Pop Culture. I would gladly spring for a case of beer for everyone who works on this zine, put on my live action *Astro Boy* video, and let them do the talking. There is a piece on Japanese toys, a John Woo interview, a great piece on the Chinese Tong gangs that should be must reading for every law enforcement agency, and they even list the best Tong movies! (The Tongs make the Russian and Italian mobs look like Boy Scout troops!). My only complaint? 90 pages just isn't enough.

REMOTE JOCKEY DIGEST #3 - P.O. Box 572349, Tarzana, CA 91356 ($2, or 4 issues for $8) - I don't know how I missed the first two issues, but I do regret it. A terrific history of the Bigfoot fraud from the fuzzy home movie footage shot by Roger Patterson to the films it spawned, beginning in the 1970's and 1980's. There is a cool expose of Michael " *Roger And Me*" Moore, there are reviews of bizarre web pages and RJD is itself on the web site: http://www.freegoodies.com/dave/webpage.htm - so check it out!

HONG KONG FILM CONNECTION #2, Vol. 4- P.O.Box 867225, Plano, TX 75086 ($4, or get 6 issues for $21) - The latest Cinema news from Hong Kong- well, you knew I was going to say that. But this issue also has on-the-set photos of Jackie Chan working with Sammo Hung on the new film *A Nice Guy*. True Hong Kong film fans know this pairing is the one to wait for. HKFC scooped everyone on this one. Lot's of reviews and interviews - immerse yourself in the most exciting action films on the planet!

Cheers,

Michael Flores

PSYCHOTRONIC RUMBLINGS

- Or. waiting for the end of the world

The end of the century seems to be passing through our lives without the cultural upheaval we expect. Usually, the top of a decade is really the end of the one before it, rumblings begin half way through any given decade to start something new. The end of the century has brought us to a point of reflection on the time that has come before us. Patti Smith is on the cover of INTERVIEW and interviewed in ROLLING STONE. Lounge music is back. People honestly want to know what the Rlat Pack was about. Cigars and martini's are cool. Students study the Beats in school.

Rap was the last explosion in popular culture and that hit in the 1980s. KISS and The SEX PISTOLS are touring. Seka, the 1970's porn star, is doing theater in Chicago. Fewer teenagers means fewer attempts at building a youth culture. *Independence Day* has brought back with a vengeance the ethics of 1950s sci-fi and audiences love it.

There is one genre that has refused to die. And it is flourishing. Hate it or love it, country music has quietly dethroned the youth culture in album sales. There are the Hat bands for men - Dwight Yoakum isn't included in this category because anyone who hears him knows that he is hard core country. The women actually have more freedom than in any other genre of popular music - no longer do they look like they have worked at factories their whole life. In rock music, the look is collegiate for rock women or high fashion for pop. Women who sing country can be young or old, dressed cowgirl informal or formal. Country music women are freed from the stereotypes most of the men have to keep alive. And country music is kicking ass.

Country has its underground sound - musicians that play the music in the old hillbilly/redneck style. Only in country is being a radical performer defined as one who remembers their roots. In rock music, the industry has defined U2 and

the nine million selling NIRVANA as alternative in an attempt to keep rock's bad boy image. Tattoos are as prevalent in the audience and bands as long hair was in the 1960's or bobby sox in the 1940's. In rap music, there is still a real underground sound and true bad boy image. The bad boy image in rock is now based on who is doing heroin. Madonna may have been the first woman in rock to play the bad girl. but her attempts at doing film show signs of a performer trying to break out of that image. *Evita* may just do it.

Country music is American music. That it has lasted for over a century is astonishing. Regulated to working class areas and southern states when it began, it has quietly been seeping into all of American culture. It began this saturation with a split. If Nashville was the home of the hillbilly twanq, country and western became the battle cry of the uprooted Southerners looking for work out west. Shiny, gaudy outfits intrigued Northerners who lined up to watch Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans. Tennessee Ernie Ford went on the radio and later television, causing people who ignored both country and country and western to take notice.. Ford wore a business suit in a move calculated to bring those afraid of the sound to him. It worked.

Black America was playing the music of the fields, and to that thing called blues the song ROCKET 88 added rhythm. The younger hillbillies loved it. The older stars hated it. Hillbillies began coming out on stage with their hair slicked back, dressed in clothes loved by gangs and delinquents singing in a country twang that scared lots of people. This marriage of country and rhythm and blues became rockabilly. The industry didn't really like it, and although most rock historians talk about how black songs were excluded on white shows and remade by Yankees with a softer way of playing the same songs, they leave out that rockabillyartists were also left out in the cold. White artists did safer versions of the tunes, and looked safe and cute. While most credit Pat Boone and Fabian, the fact remains that The Beatles killed the street sound. It was kept alive, bad boy image and all by another British act, the Rolling Stones. People forget the merchandising of the Beatles was as big as The Bay City Rollers, Menudo or even the Monkees. Dolls, toys. clothes all bought by

parents who thought they were safe for their baby boomer kids. The Stones were getting arrested and going to jail.

Country retreated to its. roots. The working man driving trucks and working his life away at factory. Rock had split from the black sound and the white sound. It was now middle class. Blacks Immersed themselves in Motown and Atlantic records. Tammy Wynette. George Jones and America true poet of song Merle Haggard sang about love, loss and a nation torn apart by the Vietnam war. In the south, rock bands began in the 1970's to throw their roots into the rock sound. Whites began playing southern black and white roots into the psychedelic mix of the time. The Grateful Dead then started covering songs by Merle Haggard (although their audience might not have known it), The Allman Brothers first two albums had the perfect blend of country and rock with a deep understanding of the blues. This was important, because people who were kids then began to notice the country sound.

The factories moved away. Detroit died. Boomers had kids. Country learned from Marshall Tucker. Lynyrd Skynyrd and early Allman Brothers and reinvented itself.. With a vengeance. It now far outsells rock. So whether you catch TNN afternoons at 2 to watch the new country videos or check out Wednesday nights at Delilah's for the old root sound, country is alive and well. It truly is the music of America. It has made it through world wars, Korea and all the other police actions. From Jimmy Rogers singing in the depression to Merle singing of the hate between the middle class and workers. Country music is the revolution that just won't die. And they really do mean it, man.

-Michael Flores

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Shows at Delilah's:
every Saturday night at 6:00 - 2771 N Lincoln Avenue

THE MYSTERIANS - JULY 20
Godzilla director Inoshira Honda made this film about an intelligent invasion of the Earth!

CAPTAIN SCARLET VS. THE MYSTERONS 5-6-27
The creators of the classic puppet TV show THUNDERBIRDS made this film about space invaders!

GHIDRAH THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER - AUGUST 3
woman from Mars warns that Ghidrah is here to wreck Earth. Only Godzilla, Rodan and Mothra take her seriously! 1965. Directed by Inoshiro Honda. GODZILLA director Inoshiro Honda.

THE GIRL CAN'T HELP IT - AUGUST 10
Jayne Mansfield stars in Frank Tashlin's classic early rock film. Little Richard, Gene Vincent, Fats Domino and more.

HORROR OF THE BLOOD MONSTERS - AUGUST 17
Al Adamson directs John Carradine in this 1971 drive-in "so bad its good" classic about a vampire attack from space!

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